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for I have seldom seen more birds to the acre than during the day to which I particularly refer, and never under circumstances more likely to result in the disaster of which I speak.

Usually, a remedy has been or may be provided for any unnecessary or undesirable destruction of birds; but there seems to be none in this instance. Since we cannot conveniently abolish the telegraph, we must be content with fewer birds. The only moral I can discern is that larks must not fly against telegraph wires.

RECENT LITERATURE.

POWELL'S EXPLORATION OF THE COLORADO RIVER.[1] SECOND NOTICE. — Our notice of the second part of this admirable report has been long deferred, but the portion on the structural geology of the region possesses additional interest on account of the publication of Major Powell's report on the geology of the Uinta Mountains, among which one branch of the Colorado, the Green River, takes its rise. As a contribution to the theory of formation of mountains the report is one of special interest. The Rocky Mountains, our author shows, have been carved out by rains and running water from a great block of sedimentary rocks which suffered erosion from the time of its first appearance above the sea. The peculiar form of the mountains is due largely to the soft nature of the rocks and the dryness of the climate. "Though little rain falls, that which does is employed in erosion to an extent difficult to appreciate by one who has only studied the action of water in degrading the land in a region where grasses, shrubs, and trees bear the brunt of the storm. A little shower falls, and the water gathers rapidly into streams and plunges headlong down the steep slopes, bearing with it loads of sand, and for a few minutes, or a few hours, the district is traversed by brooks, and creeks, and rivers of mud. . . . . When a great fold emerges from the sea, or rises above its base level of erosion, the axis appears above the water (or base level) first, and is immediately attacked by the rains, and its sands are borne off to form new deposits." Thus the mountains have never perhaps been higher above the level of the sea than at present; for example, the "Uinta Mountains were not thrust up as peaks, but were carved from a vast, rounded block left by a retiring sea, or uplifted from the depths of the ocean, and their present forms are due to erosion!"

As to the drainage of this plateau Mr. Powell concludes "that the present drainage was established in rocks now carried away from the higher regions, but [with remnants] still seen to be turned up against the flanks of most of the ranges." Thus the present river valleys in some cases are of great geological antiquity. The relation of the present river valleys to folds and faults is discussed at length. The author finds that the relation of the direction of the streams to the dip of the rocks

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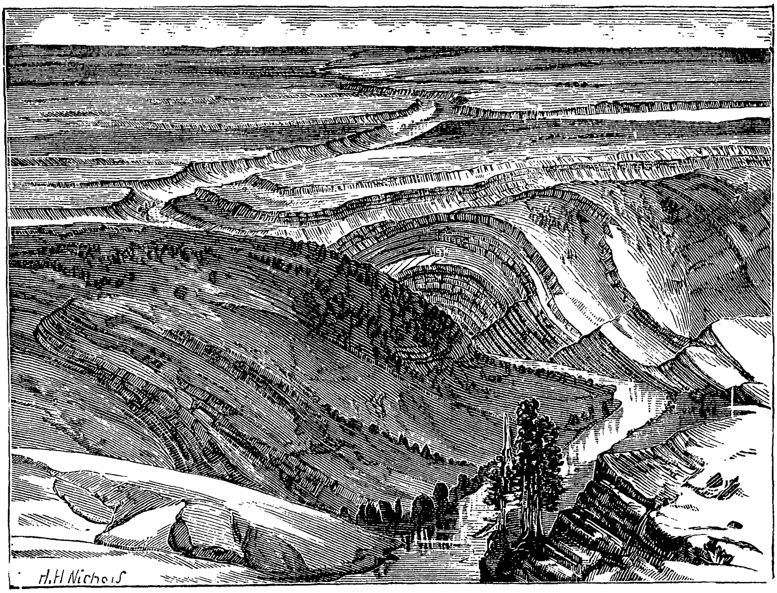
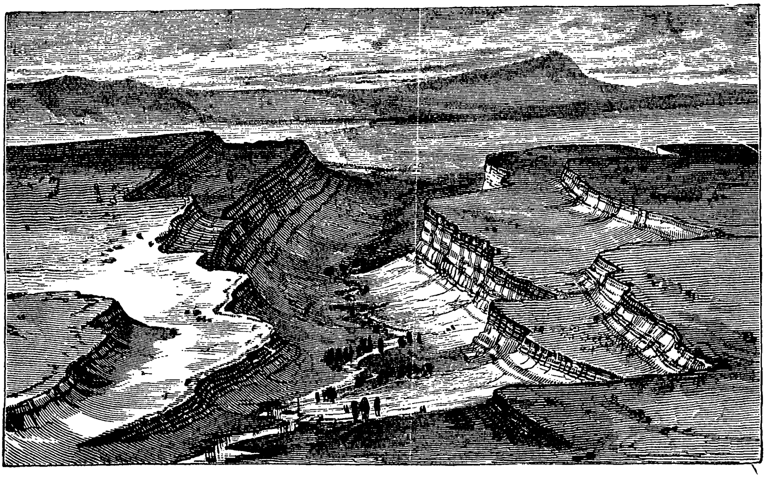
[1] *Exploration of the Colorado River of the West and its Tributaries.* Explored in 1869, 1870, 1871, and 1872, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Washington. 1875. 4to, pp. 291. With Map and Plates.

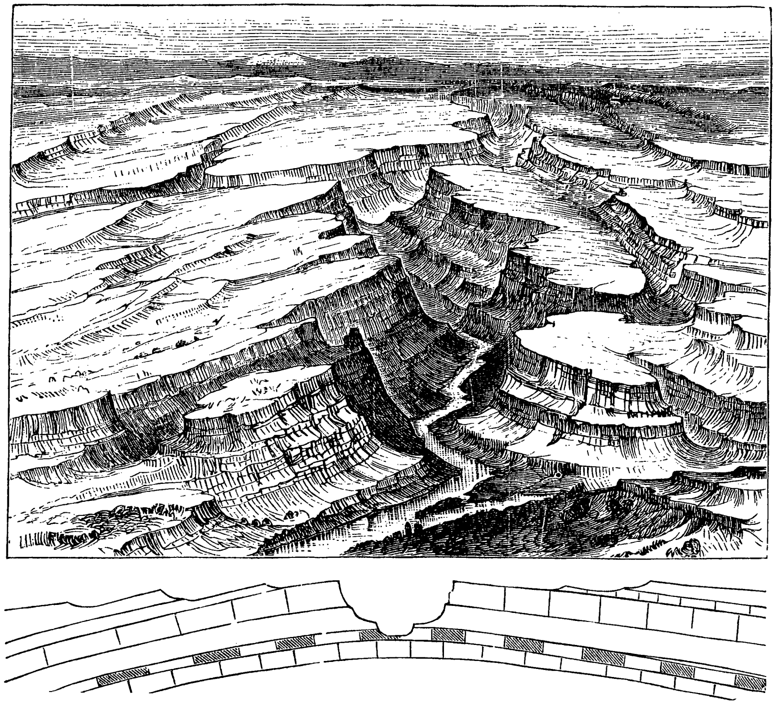


(Fig. 64.) A DIACLINAL VALLEY.

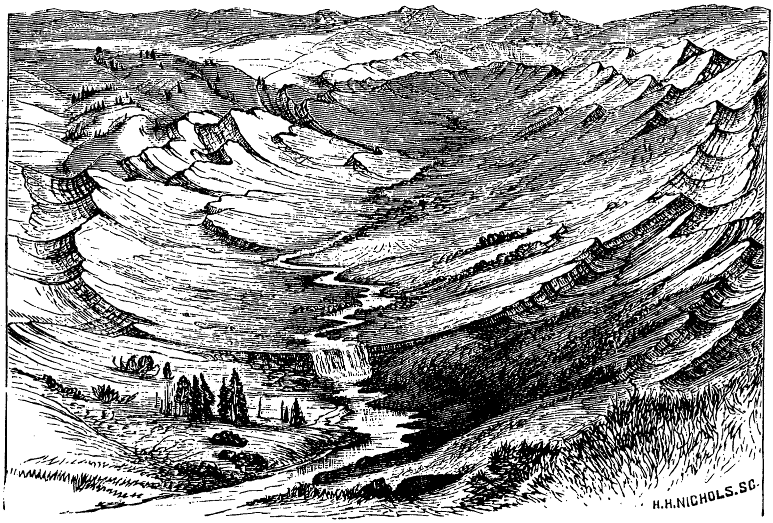


(Fig. 65.) A CATACLINAL VALLEY.

is very complex. He divides the valleys into two orders, transverse and longitudinal. Of the first order three varieties are noticed: *diaclinal* (Figure 64), those which pass through a fold; *cataclinal* (Figure 65),



(Fig. 66.) AN ANTICLINAL VALLEY, WITH SECTION.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(Fig. 67.) A SYNCLINAL VALLEY.

valleys that run in the direction of the dip; *anaclinal*, valleys that run against the dip of the beds. Of the second order there are *anticlinal* valleys (Figure 66), which follow anticlinal axes; *synclinal* valleys (Figure 67), which follow synclinal axes; and *monoclinal* valleys, which run in the direction of the strike between the axes of the fold — one side of the valley formed of the summits of the beds, the other composed of the cut edges of the formation. This classification rests solely, the author adds, on typical examples, one form often running into another.

One who is quite ignorant of geology will find the report exceedingly interesting, while the professional geologist, in whose hands the volume has now been for over a year, has doubtless profited by its perusal.

DAVIES' PREPARATION AND MOUNTING OF MICROSCOPIC OBJECTS.[1] — As a brief and compact manual of the art of preparing and mounting microscopic objects we always supposed that the present one was probably the best. The second edition is a still more useful book, and has been specially adapted by the editor for the use of medical students and young practitioners. For general use, however, we can recommend it as a cheap and reliable book.

HUXLEY AND MARTIN'S BIOLOGY.[2] — A notice, by a most competent critic, of the first edition of this excellent manual appeared in the April number of the NATURALIST. This second edition is issued at a lower price, and contains a number of corrections and alterations, the pages having been entirely reset.

JORDAN'S MANUAL OF THE VERTEBRATES OF THE NORTHERN UNITED STATES.[3] — To those desirous of a cheap manual for the ready identification of our land and fresh-water vertebrates, we should unhesitatingly recommend this book as well compiled and convenient, while the price makes it generally accessible. The characters of the classes and orders are much abbreviated, and the generic characters are confined to a key, " while for specific characters, only such points have been generally retained as are distinctive as well as descriptive." The classification is based on that of recent authors, and no important innovations seem to have been suggested by the author.

In order to test the part related to reptiles and batrachians we have identified several species, before unknown to us, with ease and certainty. The objection to such books as this is that the brief and condensed descriptions are apt to be unsatisfactory in critical cases, but as

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[1] *The Preparation and Mounting of Microscopic Objects.* By THOMAS DAVIES. Second Edition, greatly enlarged. Edited by J. MATHEWS, M. D. New York: G. P., Putnam's Sons. 1876. 12mo, pp. 214. $1.25.

[2] *A Course of Practical Instruction in Elementary Biology.* By T. H. HUXLEY, assisted by H. N. MARTIN. Second Edition, revised. London and New York: Macmillan & Co. 1876. $2.00.

[3] *Manual of the Vertebrates of the Northern United States.* Including the District east of the Mississippi River, and north of North Carolina and Tennessee, exclusive of Marine Species. By DAVID STARR JORDAN, M. S., M. D. Chicago: Jansen, McClurg, & Co. 1876. 12mo, pp. 342. $2.00.